

**I. Introduction**

Claims 1 – 3 and 5 – 7 are pending in this application. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claim 6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent format. In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

**II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

Claims 1 – 3, 5, and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Applicants Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,256,520 to Suzuki, and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0105818 to Yoshikawa. Applicants traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 recites, among other things, a data communication apparatus comprising a drop detecting circuit which detects a drop in a power supply voltage supplied to the drop detecting circuit itself. The drop detecting circuit includes a voltage converting circuit having an outputting voltage which varies depending on a drop in the power supply voltage and a comparator for comparing a voltage variation signal output from the voltage converting circuit with a predetermined constant voltage value. Independent claim 7 includes similar features. As the Examiner correctly acknowledged in the previous Office Action (dated August 23, 2006), and has again acknowledged in the current Office Action, neither the AAPA nor Suzuki, alone or in combination with each other, disclose at least these features. The Examiner now relies on Yoshikawa as allegedly disclosing these features. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Yoshikawa also fails to disclose these features.

In accordance with the configuration recited in claims 1 and 7, a drop detecting circuit detects a drop in the power supply voltage, which is supplied to the drop detecting circuit as a voltage for operating the drop detecting circuit itself. With this feature, the detecting circuit can

detect a drop in the power supply voltage when the supply of the power supply voltage is about to be stopped, and can notify other communication apparatus that the communication will be stopping prior to becoming inoperative. This allows the other communication apparatus to safely stop communication.

Yoshikawa discloses an external voltage drop detection circuit 4. This circuit receives and detects power source voltages to detect a drop in the power source applied to a connected device. However, Yoshikawa does not disclose or even suggest that the drop detection circuit 4 detects a voltage drop in the power supplied to the detection circuit itself, as recited in the pending claims.

Accordingly, as each and every limitation must be disclosed or suggested by the prior art references in order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness (MPEP § 2143.03), and the combination of the AAPA and Suzuki fails to do so, it is respectfully submitting that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references taken alone or in combination with one another.

Claims 2, 3, 5, and 6 depend from claim 1. Under Federal Circuit guidelines, a dependent claim is nonobvious if the independent claim upon which it depends is allowable because all the limitations of the independent claim are contained in the dependent claims, *Hartness International Inc. v. Simplimatic Engineering Co.*, 819 F.2d at 1100, 1108 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Accordingly, as claim 1 is patentable for the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that all dependent claims are also in condition for allowance.

### **III. Conclusion**

Accordingly, it is urged that the application is in condition for allowance, an indication of which is respectfully solicited.

**Application No.: 10/715,432**

If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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